

TITLE OF REPORT: TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT ON PROJECT BOARDS

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This report introduces the overview and scrutiny task and finish group's report on project boards.

2. FORWARD PLAN

2.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The project boards review was conducted in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's new approach to task and finish groups. It was a one day inquiries with all the witnesses giving evidence at a single sitting of the group, followed by discussion of conclusions and recommendations. The group's report is attached at Appendix A.

3.2 The format of the report is shorter too, so that members can focus on the recommendations and conclusions. Likewise the key evidence to the group has been summarised for the sake of brevity and clarity: the full evidence will be made available online along with the background papers.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 The report recommends:

- local member representation on external project boards;
- more awareness by members of the progress of projects through better communication arrangements;
- the role of the project assurance officer is strengthened;
- any lessons learned be identified and shared at the end of the project; and
- project boards be re-named to better reflect their function.

4.2 The comments of the senior management team (SMT) were not available at the time of writing the report: these will follow afterwards either as an addendum to the report or as an oral update at the meeting itself.

5. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no obvious direct costs on budgets or staff time. SMT's advice on this point will follow.

6. HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The human resources implications are likely to be minimal, although HR colleagues have advised there may be a need for staff training or briefing to raise their awareness about any new arrangements for handling projects.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There appear to be no obvious legal implications.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:
- consider the comments of SMT;
 - consider and endorse the report and its recommendations;
 - recommend that Cabinet approves the report.

9. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 To allow the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the report of the task and finish group.

10. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 10.1 David Scholes
Director of Planning, Housing and Enterprise
01462 474836
david.scholes@north-herts.gov.uk

- 10.2 Brendan Sullivan
Scrutiny Officer
01462 474612
brendan.sullivan@north-herts.gov.uk

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A: report of the task and finish group on project boards